May 21, 2021

Mrs. Lucy Sloman, AICP
City of Issaquah
1775 12th Ave NW
Issaquah, WA 98027

Project: Issaquah High School #4 and Elementary School #17, AHBL No. 2180412.10
Subject: Request for AAS for Modification of Nonmotorized Facilities Walkway Connectivity Requirements

Dear Mrs. Sloman:

This letter is to formally request an Administrative Adjustment of Standards (AAS) as outlined in the City of Issaquah Municipal Code (IMC) for the Nonmotorized Facilities Walkway Connectivity Requirements for the Issaquah High School #4 and Elementary School #17 project.

The current site design's sidewalk locations and frontage connectivity provide nonmotorized access to the main school buildings and various site buildings and elements in safe and effective way which limits impedance of vehicular traffic throughout the site and impact to existing, retained trees. Sidewalks are provided on both sides of the main road extended into the site from 228th Ave. SE. An accessible route to 228th Ave. SE is provided at the back of the HS building. A total of three frontage sidewalk connections between the site and 228th Ave. SE.

We are requesting the project's proposed three connections to the 228th Ave. SE frontage (the frontage) as shown on the provided site plan be approved to limit the impact to the existing trees being retained on the site.

Requirements

From our review of the City Code, we understand that the project must comply with the nonmotorized facilities requirements in section 18.07.080 of the Issaquah Municipal Code. The specific parts of this section that apply to this AAS request are:

- 18.07.080.B.1.b.(1): Walkway Connectivity Frequency: One sidewalk from a nonresidential or multifamily building to a public sidewalk is required in all instances with at least one (1) additional walkway required to the public sidewalk for each two hundred fifty (250) feet of street frontage.

  There is approximately 1,850 LF of 228th Ave. SE street frontage for this project. This would require 8 total frontage connections.

Civil Engineers
Structural Engineers
Landscape Architects
Community Planners
Land Surveyors
Neighbors

TACOMA
2215 North 30th Street
Suite 300
Tacoma, WA 98403-3350
253.383.2422 TEL

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Provided Design

As mentioned above, three sidewalk connections have been provided to the frontage. There are sidewalks provided on both sides of the main access road into the site. An additional accessible walk has been provided on the back side of the high school. This location was chosen because it resulted in the least amount of vertical elevation difference between the frontage sidewalk and the accessible area of the site and has minimal impact to the existing trees to be retained. In this location there is approximately 24-feet of elevation difference between the frontage sidewalk and the connection to the high school's sidewalk at the bus loop. There are two large tree retention areas between the site elements and the 228th Ave. SE and border the north and south of the main access road into the site. There are large, existing trees in these areas that are being retained to meet the City's tree retention requirements. These trees also provide natural buffering to the existing developments to the east of the site. It should be noted that the elevation difference between the tree retention areas and the frontage varies from approximately 20-40 feet. Tiered retaining walls are provided along the frontage to create these tree retention areas. The combined height of the retaining walls are approximately 25-feet tall at their highest point.

Nonmotorized Facility Modification Requirements

Per IMC 18.07.080.C: Administrative Adjustment of Standard: An applicant may request an Administrative Adjustment to these standards as established in IMC 18.07.250 and reviewed by the criteria in IMC 18.07.350. These additional considerations may also be used in any AAS review:

1. Adjustment is necessary for compliance with historic requirements.

2. Adjustment is necessary to avoid encroachment into a critical area or preserve a significant natural feature such as a large tree.

3. Adjustment is supported by public dedication of nonmotorized facilities

Justification for Modification

As previously discussed, we are retaining existing trees along the frontage. Walls are needed to retain these trees. The additional 5 connections need to meet the requirement of the IMC would impact existing trees retained. Unless additional grading of these tree retention areas are provided, some of the walks extending through there would match existing slopes in excess of 30% or greater. This could be potentially be accomplished with stairs. However, stairs require level landings approximately every 12' of elevation change and will require some regrading of the tree retention areas and will have impacts on the trees retained. Stairs would also need to be built into the proposed retaining walls protecting the tree retention areas. Lastly these additional connection points through the tree retention areas provide areas that are difficult and impractical for the school district to provide adequate supervision and to keep kids from disturbing the tree retention areas.

Conclusion

As outlined in the paragraph above, the justification for the modification meets the criteria 2 listed in the Nonmotorized Facility Modification Requirements and should be granted for the project. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, please call me at (253) 383-2422.

Sincerely,

Todd Sawin, PE
Principal

TCS/

c: Tom Mullins, Issaquah School District
Jean Stolzman, Bassetti Architects

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